

Class Struggle

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Political Revolution!

FIFTY YEARS ago this August, a paid agent of Stalin buried an ice-pick in the head of Leon Trotsky. Stalin heaved a sigh of relief. Trotsky the tireless fighter against the ruthless regime of the USSR was dead.

He had been the first to denounce the seizure of political power by Stalin's monstrous bureaucratic regime which presided over the degeneration of the Russian revolution in the 1920s and 1930s.

He defended the true legacy of the 1917 bolshevik revolution-workers power exercised through democratic councils, the spreading of the revolution internationally, and the transition to a classless and stateless society of genuine communism.

Today Stalinism is gripped by a mortal crisis. A revolutionary storm is sweeping all before it in Eastern Europe. The political revolution that Trotsky struggled for until his death has begun.

In the past upheavals have been ruthlessly crushed by the tanks of the USSR and its faithful servants in the ruling Stalinist parties. Today the situation is different. Now the death throes of Stalinism issue directly from the economic collapse of the USSR itself.

The installation of Gorbachev in 1986 as the champion of restructuring (perestroika) was a move to save the bureaucratic regime. Soviet troops abandoned Afghanistan, the Cubans withdrew from Angola and the Vietnamese left Kampuchea in an effort to cut military expenditure.

Such action underlined the fact that the keystone of Gorbachev's programme was retreat. It meant on a world scale further re-negotiations of the terms of peaceful co-existence by concessions to imperialist demands. At home it meant retreat from the principle of central planning and the introduction of market mechanisms in a desperate effort to stimulate economic growth.

Limited democratic reforms (glasnost), the admis-

sion of past crimes and a campaign against corruption were introduced in order to win popular support for Gorbachev against the old guard. But the risks of such a programme were enormous.

The reforms have not resolved the fundamental problem. Prices continue to rise, the black-market is expanding and winter has seen the worst shortages for years. The miner's strike of the summer showed that workers would not tolerate perestroika at their expense.

So, too, in Eastern Europe where the effects of glasnost have been felt even more acutely. In country after country the masses have seized the openings provided by Gorbachev's reforms while their paralysed rulers fragmented into warring factions unable to continue in the old way.

House of cards

The resulting revolutionary crisis which has seen the bankrupt Stalinist regimes topple like a house of cards before the mass power of workers and student-led revolts opens the door to three possible outcomes: the restoration of capitalism; a retrenchment of bureaucratic power by the Stalinist parties or the victory of proletarian revolution.

It was inevitable and quite understandable that years of Stalinist tyranny have turned workers against "communism". The communism they have endured has been a foul concoction of repression, bureaucratic privilege and the denial of national and political freedom.

Under such circumstances the proposals of capitalist restoration and bourgeois democracy are gaining a hearing. These forces in whatever guise—Church, Christian and Social Democratic or peasant parties aided by Western imperialism are striving to win the



▲ Romanian soldiers hold back protestors outside the offices of the National Salvation Committee.

leadership of the working masses with their bogus promises of freedom. Events in Poland are a foretaste of what this means.

Following the dictates of the IMF the Polish government has introduced an austerity package that will decimate the living standards of the Polish masses.

Prices soar as subsidies are cut. Wages have been frozen, closures and redundancies on a massive scale across the country are in the pipeline as a prelude to privatization to win from the imperialist banks of West Germany, USA Japan etc.

If capitalist restoration takes place, it will mean not only imperialist economic penetration but ultimately domination. Imperialism would then be at the very door of the USSR, threatening its security.

It is this potential for the restoration of capitalism and imperialist encirclement that raises the spectre of the alternative outcome of bureaucratic retrenchment.

The Stalinist bureaucracy derive their power from political control over the

planned economy, maintaining it by their grip on the repressive apparatus in each country.

Under the hammer blows of the present crisis they are fragmenting. And against those who favour reform and restoration stand elements who like Ceausescu and his Securitate, will fight to the death to save their skin.

In the face of growing restorationist threats, intensifying separatist nationalist movements and the spectre of imperialism on its doorstep, Gorbachev may respond as Stalin did in 1940 with a bureaucratic crack down in Eastern Europe.

The conditions for such a move will be that each and every gain won already by the masses in struggle, principally their independent organisations, are destroyed.

His banning of strikes, his crushing of national revolt, his defence of the leading role of the party and above all his refusal to condemn the Chinese bureaucratic massacres in Tiananmen show that such methods may be further required.

In the struggles of 1989 the working class have demonstrated again and again its power and capacity to make revolutions. Its only way forward lies in the programme of political revolution.

Unlike the capitalists who tolerated the enslavement of the masses by Stalinism when it suited their purposes; unlike the Stalinists who stole power from the masses of Eastern Europe and the USSR, the banner of Trotskyism has always stood for real worker's democracy and a conscious plan geared to the satisfaction of human need and against all social and national oppression.

Only a thoroughgoing political revolution can open up the way to real freedom either from bureaucratic tyranny or vicious capitalist exploitation. In the months ahead the tasks must be the fight to build and consolidate genuine independent workers organisations factory committees, trade unions, workers councils and workers militias.

In the Spring elections the fight must be for worker's candidates committed to op-

posing the sell off of the workers states to imperialism or to any return to Stalinist rule. For organised opposition in Poland and Hungary to austerity packages which seek to starve the workers so that a handful of parasites can reap the profits.

Everywhere the fight must be for working class internationalism, the spread of revolution and the destruction of all tyrants. Around this programme a revolutionary Trotskyist party must be forged to lead the battle to victory.

And such a victory, beginning even in only one country will light a new beacon of hope for workers everywhere and mankind as a whole, will inspire countless millions to take the road of revolutionary struggle. It will plunge our rulers whether bureaucratic or capitalist into panic and disarray. Such a prize is worth fighting for, the only worthy reward for those who like the Romanians have given their lives in the cause of revolution. Forward to the proletarian political revolution! Forward to world socialist revolution!■

EDITORIAL

Communist Party of Ireland Trading New Lies for Old

A SPECIAL conference of the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) has been called for April to discuss the momentous events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The conference, it is reported, will put under the spotlight many of the principles and policies which have defined the party throughout its political life. As with their counterparts across the globe proposals are on the agenda to abandon the name of 'communism', to adopt the ideas of 'market socialism' and to drop the strict adherence to state-controlled socialism.

In similar fashion Ireland's other pro-Moscow stalwart the Workers Party has admitted the need to rethink its "fundamentals".

The CPI's paper *Unity* reflects the confusion in the party as the party leadership desperately undertake a typical damage limitation exercise. In December leading party hack Brian Gormally described events in the Soviet Union thus:

As narrow and dogmatic versions of socialism are being discredited by popular revulsion in several countries of Eastern Europe, President Gorbachev has reaffirmed Soviet communism's dedication to the socialist idea. (Unity 2-12-89)

For Gormally, these events do not suggest any possible restoration of capitalism. The gleeful rubbing of hands and celebrations of western bankers and financial experts, the lining up of foreign investors, like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank etc. as they bid to impose conditions for their loans, the wave of congratulations for Gorbachev from Thatcher, Bush and the other leaders of world imperialism are no more than a carefully constructed bourgeois plot to discredit what is really the expansion of socialism by Gorbachev!

Like all Stalinists Gormally is much practised in the art of self-delusion and arguing black is white. Eventually reality began to forced itself onto the CPI leadership national executive:

Capitalism's applause for the "end of socialism" is premature. There is no doubt that the socialist countries are in crisis. An internal struggle over the nature of East European societies is underway, but many people understand that despite all the mistakes, crimes and pogroms of the past, that it was some of the policies and practices of some communist leaders that have been discredited—not the principals of socialism. (Unity 27-1-90 P4) [Our emphasis]

Clearly the fact of the crisis of "socialism" had got home to the CPI. But predictably the CPI leadership are determined to avoid offering any serious explanation for it.

Thus the deceitful suggestion that corruption, crime, abuses and mistakes could be put down to the activities of a few. Like the apologists for the iniquities of capitalism the "rotten apples in the barrel" theory seeks to deflect any examination of the "communist" system or of the nature of Stalinism which shaped it.

Even the evidence of the millions who have come onto the streets and who have brought one Stalinist regime after another tumbling to the ground cannot induce the Stalinists of the CPI to face up to this question.

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But the fact that so many people can adopt such positions after many years of socialism is in itself a sign of one kind of failure of communist parties—a failure to involve the people continuously and wage a successful ideological battle against the propaganda machine of the imperialist world. (Unity 13-1-90) [Our emphasis]

Once more the weasel-like evasion of any consideration about what kind of socialism is it which ultimately drove millions of people into revolt to destroy it. Even throughout January as the evidence accumulated daily of the hatred of the masses in Eastern Europe for the Soviet-imposed system of national and social oppression the CPI shamelessly carried a series titled "The establishment of Socialism in post-war Eastern Europe". It claims:

The changes in Eastern Europe are being portrayed as the "liberation" of the peoples of

Poland, Hungary, the GDR and Czechoslovakia from a system imposed on them by Soviet troops at the end of World War 2. This is the big lie on which anti-communist propaganda has based itself for 40 years. (Unity 6-1-90 p.4)

Written by Colin

Craig it is in the best tradition of Stalinist fabrication with not a mention of the smashing of the revolts of the workers in the GDR, Hungary and Poland in the 50's by the Soviet-backed regimes

Let no one have any illusions about how far or how deep the process of "soul searching" by Irish Stalinism will go. For despite all the horrific revelations we have seen about Stalin and Stalinism the CPI will not, dare not, confront the real nature of the blood-soaked regimes that even yet they continue to refer to as "socialist". For to do so would mean an open and honest accounting of their own historic record of defending tooth and nail everything that Stalin and his followers did.

Nowhere in the pages of the CPI press is there any mention of the fact that, like its sister party in Britain, in the 30's 40's and 50's it was the most fanatical defender of Uncle Joe's construction of the "socialist fatherland". Those who pointed to the evidence of the camps

and the millions incarcerated there, or to the famines and the millions who perished in them or the murderous repression of any who raised a voice in protest against them were dismissed by Irish Stalinists as bourgeois propagandists or counter revolutionaries in their pay.

As the example of

Colin Graig's articles illustrate, little has changed in the mentality of its leading hacks. Those like Gormally who are now full of convenient phrases about "doctrinaire versions of socialism having failed" are the same people who before Gorbachev blindly worshipped at the shrine of Soviet Stalinism.

To admit all this would mean accepting their role as lying apologists. But worse—insofar as the murderous regimes and dictatorships drew strength from their support—they were the criminal accomplices in the murder and terror carried out in the name of communism against the workers, the peasants, the minority nationalities and all the defenders of genuine Leninism. The CPI is stained with the blood of the millions of victims of Stalinism. No amount of cosmetic hand-washing will get rid of it. ■

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IRISH NATIONAL CONGRESS The Road to Nowhere

At Sinn Fein's Ard Fheis in 1988 Gerry Adams called for the building of a mass 32-county movement against the presence of British imperialism and the ruling clique in the South who represented the interests of British and multi-national capital in Ireland.

Anyone, however, fool enough to believe that this meant the launching of a campaign of action against all aspects of repression and oppression in Ireland were soon to be disillusioned. For the launching of FADA in February 1989 made it quite clear what Adams and Sinn Fein meant. At the launch Sinn Fein proposed as the basis of an anti-imperialist movement a series of "conferences and political dialogues" aimed at nationalist writers, feminists, cultural activists and radical lawyers etc. "discussing the quality of life and where the state has failed".

This perspective was based upon Sinn Fein's nationalism which holds that all social, economic and political ills of the exploited masses in Ireland are the result of national oppression. Behind the slogans of "national unity" and "freedom" therefore the successful mobilisation of the anti-imperialist forces can take place.

Apart from the August march to the British Embassy FADA in fact mobilised no one. But on the basis of its talkshops with artists, priests, clapped-out Fianna Failers and yesterday's socialists—a conference to launch the INC took place in Liberty Hall on Saturday 20 January.

Aims & Objectives

About 200 people heard Bernadette McAliskey in opening the conference argue for the need to draw together all the various campaigning forces in Irish society. She appealed for maximum agreement between the various groups and individuals present in order to mobilise "the maximum dissent against those oppressing us nationally, socially and economically".

But just like FADA it soon became clear that the INC had no perspective for building a mass anti-repression move-

IWG Resolution to INC Conference

This conference resolves to build an All-Ireland campaign of action against repression, having as its general goals **British Troops Out of Ireland Now and Disarm and Disband the UDR and RUC.**

To this end we aim to build a mass action front united in the fight for the most immediate demands against all forms of pro-imperialist repression, north and south; respecting the political independence of each component in the front; and open to all who are willing to struggle for these demands.

Among the immediate demands for which we fight are the ending of extradition and the immediate release of the Birmingham Six.

The scope of our demands and the social forces to which we address our agitation shall be subject to review by democratic conferences of delegates from action groups which we seek to build in every local centre.

An interim national committee shall be comprised of delegates from all participating organisations, mandated to rally forces for an open, democratic launching conference within two months

ment. Its objectives, debated in the morning session, amounted to no more than bland nationalist pieties for Freedom, Unity and Peace in Ireland.

We opposed such a platform as no guide to action or no basis for mass mobilisation against repression. We argued on a motion [see below] that would have committed those present to set about building an All-Ireland action campaign against repression, focussed initially on fighting extradition, repression North and South and releasing the Birmingham Six.

Starting thus a mass campaign against repression could be built. It would unite together all the scattered one-issue campaigns of the moment—Anti-Extradition, Section 31, Plastic Bullets, Birmingham Six etc. Only in this way can a mass anti-imperialist movement to force British imperialism out of Ireland be built.



▲ Bernadette McAliskey courting allies on the right.

The call by the IWG to turn the meeting into a launching pad for joint action against repression was applauded by many but the Sinn Fein inspired "aims and objectives" for the INC—Freedom, Unity and Peace—were passed.

In the afternoon the conference debated motions drafted by the Ad-Hoc Committee from resolutions, which they claimed, were submitted by INC supporters.

Immediate Issues?

The motions here in keeping with the empty pieties contained in 'Aims & Objectives' covered issues as wide apart as the environment, the Irish language and revisionist history writing. Other motions committed the INC to support the various one-issue campaigns, Birmingham Six, Extradition etc. These the IWG supported for at least they addressed concrete issues of struggle as did the decision to organise a mass demo against Thatcher's proposed EC summit visit.

But one demo does not make a campaign, especially one that sets itself the target of an eventual British withdrawal from Ireland. No time for motions from the floor was permitted and therefore the IWG resolution was not debated to test what forces were prepared to commit themselves to real action.

The emergence of the INC underlines how far the drift to the right in Sinn Fein has now gone. The pan-Catholic propaganda front has now been created and stands as a major obstacle to those who wish to confront capitalist imperialism North and South in this island.

The failure of the so-called revolutionary left, like the SWM, IRSP and LWR to even appear signals once more a political cowardice to confront Irish nationalism when the chips are down. The Peoples Democracy attended. But they only managed to argue a vague appeal for the INC to include a labour movement perspective in its programme. ■

OUT NOW! The Trotskyist Manifesto

A new transitional programme for
world socialist revolution

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Hands Off Panama!

LATE IN DECEMBER, US TROOPS stormed into Panama to oust former CIA protege Manuel Noriega. The invasion was portrayed in the media as a noble attempt to halt the activities of a corrupt drugs baron and criminal offender. Nothing could be further from the truth.

What had Manuel Noriega, once the chosen agent of US imperialism, done to upset the White House? After all, this was no "pink" regime, threatening to spread revolution. Noriega's past presented no problems to a US administration that had previously blocked investigations into his known criminal activities. Nor has the US made a habit of objecting to dictatorial rule. Those who backed the bloody regimes of the Shah, of Pinochet or who now prop up the government of El Salvador, are no friends of democracy.

The real problem with Noriega was that he had ceased to be a stable ally for the US. Quite apart from his increasingly flamboyant criminal links, he was long known to be working for the Cuban, Israeli and Taiwanese intelligence services as well.

Also, the US administration are obliged by the provisions of a 1977 treaty to hand over the canal—from whose use they have profited handsomely—to Panamanians by the year 2000. That is why they were at pains to find a more compliant lap dog to safeguard their strategic interests in the area.

THE FINAL STRAW

The final straw came when Noriega nullified election results which gave a victory to the US-backed candidate — Guillermo Endara. Intervention became a necessity.

Yet the invasion was not without risks. For Noriega had threatened to reveal uncomfortable truths about the US administration itself if he is brought to trial. Thus the US opted for a Rambo-style "shoot first—ask later" invasion, presumably hoping Noriega would be one of the casualties and thus take his "secrets" to the grave.

Panamanian workers and barrio dwellers shed few tears for the plight of the murderous Noriega. In workers' areas which resisted the invasion it was due to the anti-Yankee rhetoric of the regime. There have been few welcoming demonstrations for the conquering Yankees. Workers are quite right to be suspicious when the new "civilian" President Endara was sworn in by a US army general at a US army base!

The prospects for democratic rights look distinctly unhealthy.

US forces blockaded the Cuban Embassy, they broke international law in a flagrant raid on the Nicaraguan Embassy and have kept foreign journalists incommunicado for long periods at a time.

Panama's workers and peasants have no chance to carve out their own destiny while US imperialism remains in charge. Panama was a US creation. The isthmus was made "independent" of Colombia at the turn of the century so that the US could build and control the canal and occupy the ten mile strip of the "Canal Zone". Panama does not even have its own currency, it uses the US dollar. For close on a century, the US has shamelessly exploited the region.

Panama owes its creditors \$2.4 billion and has not made a payment in two years. Yet US imperialism continues to profit from its use of the canal, even though direct freight has slightly diminished its importance.

REAL BENEFITS

To throw out the US imperialists and gain the real benefits of the agricultural and mineral assets, alongside those of the canal itself, Panama's workers' movement will need to maintain independence from all the bourgeois politicians, whether pro-US "democratisers" or fake anti-imperialists of the Noriega brand.

The fight for democratic rights, against price hikes, for proper facilities in the barrios, to oust the plantation owners—all these aims need to be fought for by independent workers' and peasants' organisations.

Recent events are a grim reminder—if the Latin American masses needed one after US action in Grenada and Nicaragua—that the old Monroe Doctrine, "Not in my backyard", is alive and well. Washington policy makers will baulk at nothing to defend their own hides.

The real allies of Panama's poor are their fellow workers and peasants in Latin America, especially in Colombia.

A united fight against both the local corrupt politicians and the US imperialists could be part of the continent wide smashing of the US's shackles. ■

STUDENT UNION LEADERS in TCD have just dealt a body-blow to the campaign for access to abortion information. In October they defiantly faced the High Court, injunctioned by SPUC, and refused to call off their provision of information to women wishing to contact abortion counselling and clinics.

A month later SPUC appealed in the Supreme Court and, as the IWG argued, they won a judgement which reaffirmed the status quo—that distributing information on abortion would amount to contempt of court. The new ruling was harsher than any previously in one respect. It deemed the provision of information as "aiding and abetting" the criminal procurement of abortion.

On Dec. 21st, only two days after this reserved judgement was disclosed, the officers of the Student Union received a demand from Jack McGinley, secretary of the FWUI trade union section in the college that they cease to distribute abortion information. Unionised employees of the Student Union had expressed anxiety to McGinley about the fate of their jobs if a further court action should sequester the Student Union assets. In fact they are paid out of funds which are not held as assets but are disbursed to them by the College on a monthly basis. McGinley transformed the workers' anxieties into a set of four demands on the Student leaders. At no stage were these voted on nor was there any prior consultation with the other 90% of the FWUI section in TCD who had elected McGinley and in whose name he signed the letter. The contents of the letter were not revealed to the other union members or to the student body until the *Tribune* published a leaked copy on Jan 21st—to the ire of the student leaders.

McGinley's first point was not a problem—that the workers should not be required to distribute abortion information. This would not have stopped the student leaders, however, from carrying out their mandate. The other three demands were outrageous—for the student leaders to stop giving out abortion information, not to allow their premises be used for the service, and not to "compromise

Abortion Information Sellout

the position of the college or the good name of the student body in contravention of the Supreme legal body of the state".

This narrow-minded act in the name of "trade unionism" is utterly reactionary and openly does SPUC's job for them. It provided the student leaders, already facing all the pressure of the courts, with the perfect get-out for dropping their information service. They announced that they were ending their defiance in a statement put out after the FWUI letter was publicised.

Reactionary Demands

As we go to press both McGinley and the student leaders still have to face general meetings of their members. It is vital that they be called to account. FWUI (now SIPTU) members must be won to repudiate McGinley's reactionary demands and to openly support whatever action the student leaders may take to defy the anti-democratic edict of the judicial hirelings of a reactionary anti-woman bourgeoisie. TCD has suffered many cuts in job levels which have not been fought by the FWUI. Members working for the Student Union can hardly feel more secure in their jobs for having representatives whose concern is the "good name" of the employer which has been no friend of the union.

The possible sequestering of Student Union assets, cannot be allowed hold back the struggle for vital democratic principles. It did not hold back the brave struggle of the National Union of Miners in Britain where the scale and importance of their asset was vastly greater than anything a Student Union might lose.

ruling against which Norris brought his case to Europe. They have even threatened to campaign for a referendum on the issue if the government does not toe their line.

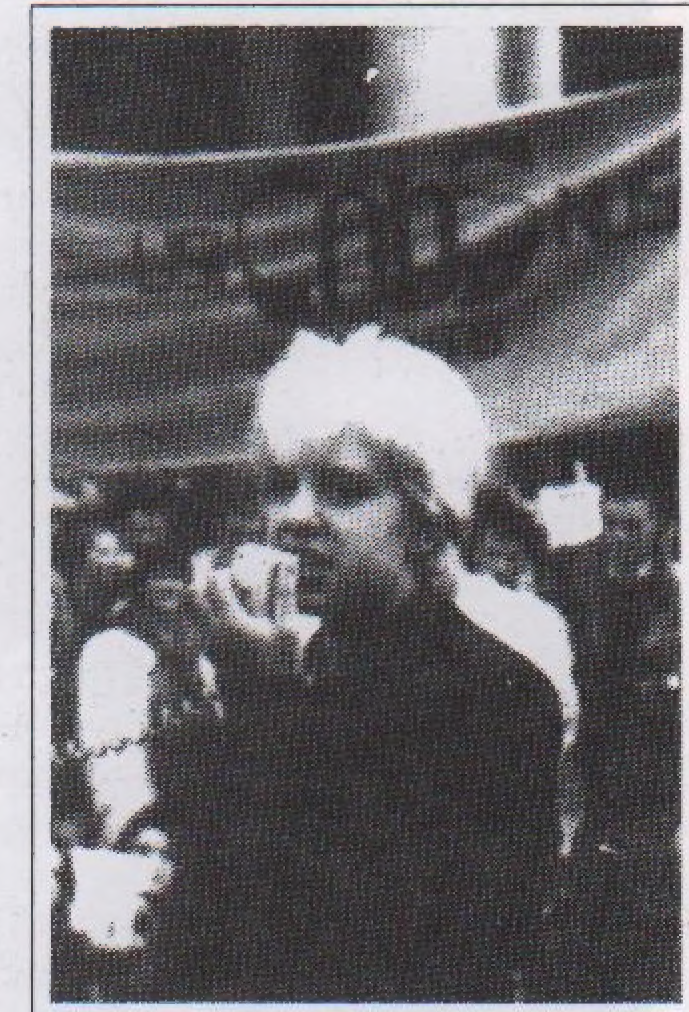
Faced with this threat it is more urgent than ever to bring together all who are committed to fight against sexual oppression—against any state interference in the sexual lives of citizens:

- For the repeal of legislation criminalising homosexuality (1861, 1862 and 1885 Acts)
- For full equality of lesbians and gays with heterosexuals before the law
- For trade unions to defend gay workers from attack or discrimination
- For scientific and secular sex education to challenge the stranglehold of the clerical school bosses.

Any such sequestration would rather provide even more fuel in pitting the whole student body against the reactionary position of the Irish state on women's rights.

In the week prior to these events the student body at TCD in fact overwhelmingly reaffirmed the mandate on their leaders to distribute abortion information, winning 68% in a referendum.

"Pro-life" students (proliferation for women) carried similar referenda in their favour in several colleges. IWG



▲ Ivana Bacik, TCD President

consistently argued that the democracy of student assemblies was far better because only those can vote who are present to hear both sides of the argument. By deliberately bringing the ballot box to conservative students who abstain from student political life, whose prejudices from a religious anti-sexuality school system have never been confronted, the pro-lifers managed to formally overturn in referenda the democratic decisions of the student assemblies in several colleges.

For the same reasons IWG in TCD opposed the petition of the anarchist left (signed also by an organiser for the sectarian Spartacist tendency) for a referendum to supposedly pre-empt the pro-lifers. The initiative was supported by the student leaders. The referendum proposition contained five items, three or four of which no-one could disagree with. It was little better than a stunt to make it difficult to vote no to the first point on abortion information. Many students soon saw it as such. Under pressure, the leaders backtracked at the last minute to allow students to vote on each point separately. Despite being caught out in a dubious manoeuvre they were then given an overwhelming 68% affirmation of their mandate—to distribute abortion information, in the full knowledge of the Supreme Court ruling against such action!

Within ten days, the TCD leaders decided to cease their action! An emergency Assembly of the students must now be called to enforce the mandate. Continue the abortion information service, or replace the present leaders with new ones who will carry it out!

In the text of this latest capitulation to SPUC, the TCD student leaders call for a campaign to be built now to remove the legal obstacles to the women's right to information!

Readers of *Class Struggle* will know that *alone* on the Irish left the IWG has repeatedly argued for 4 years since the Hamilton judgement for a campaign which would consciously set out to smash these legal obstacles. At all times we were openly opposed in this by the Socialist Workers Movement, by the anarchist WSM, by Peoples' Democracy, and most recently by the student union leaders who had called for a national alliance of organisations on the issue and then rejected our proposal!

We argued for a mobilising campaign which would include Repeal of the 1861 Act and of the anti-abortion 8th Amendment. We called for defiance, defence, repeal. But defiance above all! A campaign which ran from SPUC, which ran away from the fight for defiance of the law, would be a campaign that could never smash the legal obstacles. That is what is now proposed by the TCD student leaders. Lobbying for long-distance legal reform without building action is nothing but camouflage for evading the central issues.

Abortion on Demand

As IWG has argued since the 1983 8th Amendment campaign, women's right to control of their fertility requires free and legal access to safe abortion facilities on demand. Over 80,000 women in Ireland have had abortions by visiting Britain, in the past 20 years, and many tens of thousands of women, youth and workers would vehemently oppose the existing laws which criminalise them, if given a lead.

However, in the relatively backward social conditions of Ireland, only a minority of pro-women activists are as yet persuaded to the necessity of *abortion on demand*. In that situation the IWG continues to call for a united campaign of action for defiance of the law, defence of those threatened for their action, and repeal of the legal obstacles, with the goal of *decriminalising abortion*.

Such a campaign, though falling short of our full demand, can be a major bridge from the present defensive situation towards building a real movement, especially among working class women, for positive abortion rights. In struggle, in the debate on what kind of abortion facilities should be provided, the IWG will seek to persuade militants to fight for nothing less than free abortion on demand. ■

CORRECTION

The article on the IRSP and Armed Struggle in *Class Struggle* 17 should have said that communists in the imperialist, not imperialised countries give unconditional but critical support to anti-imperialist Movements.

Fight Anti-Gay Attacks

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND Connell grabbed media attention recently when he described homosexuality as a "disorder" that afflicts people unnecessarily. When asked to say what type of disorder was involved the learned philosopher explained thus: "I simply don't know".

Not that this prevented him from identifying the source of the problem as the fact that homosexuality has become "an alternative lifestyle" whereas previously it was "practically unmentionable".

His comments are a veiled reference to the victory of Senator David Norris in the European Court in Oct. 1988

when he secured a ruling against the Southern state's continued criminalization of male homosexuality under Victorian laws. This ruling has no compulsory force in Irish courts. In theory the Irish legislature would either have to adopt a more enlightened law or to derogate from the Convention. In practice it did nothing. The IWG warned at the time that:

Any suggestion that the European Court ruling... would lead to a rapid correction of the law... should be taken with a fistful of salt. (CS no. 10, 1988).

We argued instead that a wait-and-see approach would be fatal and that the Irish left

and gay activists should mobilise to fight against the legal provisions that oppress gays. Tragically that has not happened.

Despite this, the fear that the Irish bourgeoisie are softening on the issue or that they are considering decriminalization has led the moral guardians to crawl out from under their stones once again.

Emboldened by the timidity of the left and labour movement, the Right have bounced back. Family Solidarity have made it abundantly clear that they still adhere to the 1983 Supreme Court Ruling—which condemns homosexuality as alien to Christian and natural values—the

EASTERN EUROPE'S most repressive regime has fallen. Its most hated Stalinist dictator is dead. But the Romanian revolution is not over, as the bourgeois rulers of the West would like to believe. Only its first phase is at an end. The most important tasks lie ahead.

The workers must retain their arms. The bourgeois democratic counter-revolution must not succeed. The workers and peasants must take power into their own hands.

The revolution and civil war between 16 and 25 December 1989 was the most courageous uprising against Stalinism since the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The hypocrisy of the imperialists in their rejoicing for Ceausescu's downfall is staggering. For decades they toasted and feted Ceausescu. All the while Ceausescu killed and imprisoned those who even voiced support for democratic rights.

In his final years Ceausescu's repression was increasingly directed against sections of the bureaucracy itself. The inner clique grew narrower with Ceausescu's family playing an ever more central role. Although they vilified Gorbachev's process of bureaucratic reform after 1985, the Ceausescu went to the wall on Christmas day, its direct victim.

But the mass protests of the Romanians did not result in strengthening the hand of the reform wing of the Romanian bureaucracy and the relatively peaceful eclipse of the Ceausescu dynasty. Unlike in the GDR or the Czechoslovakia such a reform wing barely existed, still less did it form a silent majority. Unlike elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Romania was not subordinate to the command structure of the Warsaw Pact and had no Soviet Armed Forces on its soil.

Therefore the Moscow bureaucracy had little control over events. The Kremlin could not hope to stay the hand of the Bucharest executioner. Rather, civil war ensued, precipitated by a split in the bureaucracy and above all in the armed forces.

It was natural that the gathering storm should first appear in the border areas among ethnic Hungarians. The students of Timisoara played a vanguard role. Then the workers moved into action.

Together they made the first and heaviest sacrifice of the revolution. They rose in mass support for a local dissident pastor. The security apparatus moved in to quell and isolate the movement between the 16 and 18 December; at this stage the army joined the fray against the workers and students. Soon the 500 on the streets turned to 5000. The Securitate tried desperately to drown the rebellion in blood. But on the 19th and 20th December the workers in the factories around Timisoara went on strike, some threatening to destroy their factories. Some 80,000 took to the streets, stole their first few arms and stood firm.

Faced with the "fight to the death" stance of the security services loyal to Ceausescu, reforms could only material-

Revolution in Romania

ise by the army chiefs siding with the revolution from below. On 22 December Milea, the Defence Minister, agreed to withdraw the troops from the fighting. The Securitate promptly murdered him.

This act finally provoked the bulk of the 140,000 strong army into open revolt against the ruling regime as they sided with the workers and peasants. Open civil war raged the length and breadth of Romania. Dual power was established, especially in the towns and cities, where the workers

elements of dual power and to disarm the workers and students, it is to be expected that the most pro-capitalist elements will seek to strengthen their position by the manipulation of popular protest.

The Romanian workers must not be deprived of the fruits of their sacrifice. They must stop the bourgeois-democratic counter-revolution in its tracks. The second phase of the revolution, the proletarian political revolution must now begin in earnest.

In the civil war rank and

file soldiers played a crucial role in defeating the armed resistance of the Securitate. It is therefore urgent that democratic soldier's committees are built with the right to investigate and punish the misdeeds of their officers and to elect their own leaders.

After many years of savage repression, the first sign of political crystallization of parties and programmes is emerging. The result is an acute crisis of leadership. The workers must not stand aside and let the intelligentsia and discredited CP bosses form the political parties of reconciliation and pro-imperialism. Workers need a revolutionary communist (Trotskyist) party that can consolidate gains and establish proletarian power in Romania.

Factory-based organisations of the workers appeared only after the workers and students were on the streets, arms in hand. It is essential that these are linked in united fronts with local revolutionary committees. The most urgent task of the workers committees is to refuse calls to give up arms to the forces of "law and order" and to spread arms distribution to the revolutionary committees.

Stalinist enemies of the working class want to maintain their rule behind the

facade of parliaments and the promise of elections every few years for representatives who cannot be held accountable for their actions. The Romanian workers must hold full power; for a government not of the NSF or the National Christian Peasant Party but of the sovereign worker's and poor peasant's councils.

While this government remains in power it must take measures to improve the position of women. Romanian women must have full access to free contraception and abortion.

The Romanian proletariat know only too well what a sick joke the "statistics of socialism" were in their country. Luxury and privilege for Ceausescu's caste but only punishing work norms, lengthening queues and empty shelves for the majority of toilers. But this was not the fault of "communism" or "socialism" because these have never been reached and were never even the goals of the bloated bureaucrats of Bucharest. Bureaucratic planning could never create a genuine socialist society. The road from starvation and autarchy must not lie through opening up Romania to blood-sucking world imperialism. From the imperialist governments we must demand Cancel All Debts to Romania and Aid Without Strings.

The workers must take control of the central planning organisations. They must draw up a new worker's plan

whose objective is to meet the consumption needs of the masses, and to modernise the villages and agricultural production in league with poor peasant organisations, to increase equality and to open the road to genuine socialism and communism.

Romanian workers must grant autonomous region status to the oppressed national populations, including the right to be educated in their own language and rights to cultural facilities. For the right to self determination. For the right of areas in the USSR (Moldavia) with a Romanian majority to unite with the Romanian nation, if they so wish.

The heroic actions of the Romanian workers and peasants have shown the path for liberation of all republics in the USSR. Not fratricide between the national groups, but unity against the hated Stalinist bureaucracy. These must be the lessons for all the peoples of Eastern Europe and the USSR.

- No to Social Counter-revolution!

- No to the disarming of workers and militants!

- For Proletarian political revolution throughout Eastern Europe!

- For a Free Federation of Workers' states on the road to the Socialist United States of Europe!



▲ Students in Bucharest Polytechnic celebrate the revolution

set up armed revolutionary committees to fight alongside the army.

Thousands died in the course of eliminating the rats of the Securitate from the underground passages where they infested Bucharest. Ceausescu was tried and executed and a new Provisional Government announced, formed from within the National Salvation Front (NSF).

The NSF had no existence prior to the uprising and is at present a loose, politically incoherent coalition of bureaucrats purged by the Ceausescu clique and of unrepresentative workers and intellectuals.

The new government is led by Ion Iliescu, a minister under the old regime up to the mid 1980s. He is a well known Gorbachevite. The imperialist powers are now seeking to develop political leverage within the NSF through swift recognition of this unelected government and the deployment of their agencies of international aid.

The Kremlin, by contrast, was cautious in the midst of the storm. In order to prove itself to Washington and Europe it observed its "non-interference pact" even in its own "backyard". It was willing to risk the disaster of a successful Ceausescu backlash.

The new government's final physiognomy is not yet decided. Although all factions are keen to end the remaining

THE BANKRUPT Stalinists of the SED and the gloating capitalists of Bonn are agreed: the only answer to the crisis of the GDR is to sell it to the highest bidder!

West German capitalists are queueing to buy up the advanced sectors—optics, textiles, printing. For the workers in those industries this will mean "rationalisation"—speed-up and redundancies. For those in the other industries it will mean the scrap heap.

But capitalist restoration would not only mean lengthening dole queues and social insecurity but preparation for a new division of Europe—the economic enslavement of eastern Europe by the imperialist powers. The working class of the GDR and eastern Europe must not pay the price of Stalinist mismanagement and crisis! No surrender to the class enemy! No German imperialist re-unification!

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS

Capitalism was not destroyed by the workers of the GDR but by an army of occu-

The LRCI, of which IWG is a section, has been intervening in the growing opposition movement in the German Democratic Republic. LRCI activists have paid particular attention to the *United Left* which claims to be developing a broad movement of the left rather than a party. As such it fails to put forward what is so desperately sought by the most advanced workers—a clear and coherent programme around which to build a real alternative to the stalinist Socialist Unity Party (SED) and social-democratic formations.

The *United Left* stands for the defence of planned property in the GDR, combining anti-Stalinism with a call for a system of workers' councils to administer society. Rejection of any return to capitalism under the guise of uniting Germany was the theme of a recent demonstration on which LRCI activists distributed a leaflet which is translated and reproduced here.

pation and an imposed bureaucracy. Together they have plundered the resources of the country and led it to disaster. Karl Marx insisted that the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the class itself. That is what has been missing. Only independent workers' organisations can prevent the return of the capitalists.

The working class is not just one part of *Das Volk*, its power cannot be exercised by a handful of individuals in an uncontrollable parliament or in the private negotiations of a "round table". Although the working class might use par-

liamentary elections to make its voice heard, it cannot use them to take power. As Luxemburg said, "Where the chains of capitalism are forged, there they must be broken". The basic strength of the working class lies in the factory: for factory committees elected by and recallable to sovereign mass meetings. The workers themselves must decide who will represent them!

FOR WORKERS' DEMOCRACY!

For the full right to organise politically and in trade unions for all who accept the sovereignty of mass meetings

and workers' democracy! Only open discussion and experience will clarify who really stands for the working class and who is really a confused or concealed supporter of capitalism. Genuine revolutionaries, those who stand by the unfalsified principles and programme of Lenin and

▼ East Berlin youths displayment to



GDR: Not for S

in Crisis

Gorbachev's decision to send the Soviet Armed Forces into Azerbaijan seems to have been motivated by the accelerated disintegration of central government authority in the republic. Moreover, on the eve of the SAF's intervention, there was a possibility that the extreme nationalist elements in the Azeri Popular Front were about to seize power.

The horrific pogrom in Baku, whether it was initiated by local Party/KGB chiefs or black hundred elements in the Azeri National Salvation Front, provided a pretext for the SAF to go in. There appears to be evidence that the Popular Front attempted to end and suppress the pogrom. An added political complication is that clearly the Soviet Bureaucracy's two major factions, the conservatives and the marketizing reformers had different objectives in Azerbaijan.

The reformers' project is to encourage the Popular Front with its CPSU component to oust the old leadership and let it be part of the Azeri forces for perestroika. Their opponents, on the other hand, set the ball rolling over the claims for Nagorno Karabakh. In the end all forces in Azerbaijan were competing in anti-Armenian demagoguery with the Party losing out and the most extreme anti-party nationalist element coming to the fore.

With the arming of the militias, the disintegration of the Republic's forces, with the imminence of war against the Armenian militia, the seizure and tearing down of certain border points, and finally with the seizure of power in Pushkinov, it would appear that an insurrection to wage war against Armenia was close at hand.

If this was so, then revolutionary communists could not have favoured the seizure of power by nationalist-chauvinist organisations, whether in Azerbaijan, Armenia, or for that matter, Georgia. In these conditions the intervention of troops and the preventing of such an outcome would have to be supported, without expressing any political confidence in the Kremlin or the tactics of the troops. It is not clear, however, whether this was

the case in Azerbaijan. Certainly, given the lies of the Bureaucracy after the massacre in Tbilisi, we do not automatically accept the Kremlin's explanations of events.

The whole policy of Gorbachev has encouraged and conceded to national chauvinism, including his refusal to grant the self-determination of Nagorno Karabakh, then imposing direct rule upon it, then returning it to Azerbaijan. The intervention of the SAF was a desperate last-minute action and may well be part of an unjustified bid by the conservatives to smash all dissent and all political life in Azerbaijan and beyond in order to coerce and overrule all the nationalities threatening disintegration to the USSR by their demands for self-determination.

LEGITIMATE TASKS

We are therefore in favour of the presence of the Soviet Armed Forces to carry out the following tasks:

- preventing pogroms and forced population transfer;
- preventing war between Armenian and Azerbaijan militias;
- preventing the armed seizure of power by nationalists;
- defending the borders of the USSR;
- breaking the blockade of Nagorno Karabakh.

On this basis we do not call for the withdrawal of the Soviet Armed Forces from Azerbaijan. Armenians in Baku have and had the right to call on the state forces, including the troops, to defend them against pogroms and evictions.

Revolutionaries can give no overall support to Gorbachev's policies in Transcaucasia. No support whatsoever can be given to a blanket ban on organisations or a general ban on strikes, street demonstrations etc. That is why we oppose the declaration of a state of emergency. In so far as the troops enforce such bans we condemn their action. Whilst it is necessary to take determined action against those who fomented pogroms or insurrection, it should not extend to other political and social organisations. Suppression of such organisations would further inflame nationalist and anti-communist sentiments.

Nationalities within the USSR should have the right to self-determination up to and including the right to secede from the USSR if they choose. However, in exercising this right, one nationality cannot be allowed to trample on the national rights of others. Armenians and Azerbaijanis are clearly nationalities with the right of self-determination, but they have disputed territorial claims which must be decided not on the basis of historic claims to land but of the free self-determination of the people inhabiting a given area.

The people of Nagorno Karabakh have an incontestable right to secede from Azerbaijan and become part of Armenia or become a separate Republic within Transcaucasia if they wish. They have clearly expressed their desire to secede and this must be supported by all democrats, let alone socialists. To rule this out in advance as Gorbachev has done

Azerbaijan

The threat of civil war in the USSR between Armenian and Azeri national movements led to the sending in of the Soviet Armed Forces and imposition of a state of emergency on Azerbaijan by the Kremlin. Where should revolutionaries stand on this question? Here we present the position of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International, adopted on 28th January.

merely inflames Armenian nationalism, leading to the growth of some groups within the republic calling for total independence from the USSR.

The Azeri nation has justified grievances. Their territory is divided between the USSR, Iran and Turkey. In none of these countries have their democratic rights been fully recognised. The revolutionary solution to this would be the unification of the Azeris as a voluntary member of the USSR. Only on the basis of democratically planned integration into the economy of the whole Union could the economic backwardness of Azerbaijan be overcome—such as the lack of investment and high unemployment which have all fuelled nationalist sentiments.

REACTIONARY STRUGGLE

However, such a positive programme is not that of the Azeri Popular Front whose struggles, by contrast, have been aimed at using force to retain within their republic and to assert physical control of a region whose population is not Azeri. It is a reactionary struggle for national privileges, not a progressive one against national oppression, despite the many real grievances against Moscow that the Azeris undoubtedly have. The Azeri-speaking people of the whole region undoubtedly have their genuine national grievances and aspirations. Some ten million Azeris live in Iran where they enjoy little or no self-government and where their language and culture are

ignored and discriminated against. Similar conditions affect the smaller number of Azeris in Turkey. Yet the Stalinists and Popular Front nationalists lay little or no stress on the struggle for a united and independent Azerbaijan which would free those people from national oppression.

For all these reasons, support for Azerbaijan national demands must be conditional on all their acceptance of Nagorno Karabakh's right to secede. This would have to be accompanied by conscious and determined defence of the rights of all Azeris within Armenia and Armenians within Azerbaijan to live without threat of violence or discrimination. Those who have been forced to flee must be able to return if they wish, with their safety guaranteed by armed militias if necessary. Positive propaganda is needed which counters national-chauvinist sentiments and which espouses the right of all national minorities to cultural and linguistic rights.

To solve the national tensions in the Caucasus, all national rights must be respected. But secession from the USSR is not the best way forward for these peoples. To be independent would mean developing greater links with world imperialism which would step in to exploit the resources and the masses of the region. Under the influence of neighbouring Iran, Azerbaijan would be pushed towards creating an Islamic state, a thoroughly reactionary development which all workers,

peasants and especially women must resolutely oppose. Rather than secession, the nationalities should seek to unite in a struggle against the Stalinist Bureaucracy, for the USSR to become a free federation of republics. A Transcaucasian Federation of Soviet Republics, itself part of a free federation of the whole of the Soviet Union, could have overcome the problems of the fifty plus different intermixed nationalities and ethnic groups of the Caucasus.

Most importantly, the masses of Azerbaijan and Armenia need to be won to a programme which tackles their fundamental problem, the programme of Political Revolution. There must be:

a massive injection of central funds as part of a revised centralised democratic plan; a massive expansion of social provision in housing; sharing out available work with no loss of pay, to end unemployment; for workers' management of the enterprises through elected factory councils; workers' councils in every district, city and republic to take control away from the parasitic and corrupt bureaucrats; for workers' management of the Plan to ensure that production is geared towards the needs of the workers, not the Bureaucracy or the world market. A revolutionary Trotskyist party committed to the rights of nationalities, resolutely opposed to any national oppression, is the only force that can unite the oppressed nations in a struggle against oppression and bureaucratic rule. ■

ale!

Trotsky, do not fear political argument and disagreement within the workers' organisations. We are confident that time will prove us right! But we do not recognise any democratic rights for those who will only use them to prepare another defeat for the workers! No free speech for fas-

seized during a raid on the offices of the GDR's Stasi security police



cists! The working class knows already what the Nazis will do if allowed to organise! The arguments they need are made with heavy boots and iron bars!

FOR AN ECONOMY PLANNED BY AND FOR THE WORKERS!

Bureaucratic planning has proved itself incapable of running an efficient economy and meeting the needs of the working class. The workers themselves must take control of the economy! Their organisations can and must impose their priorities at every level

of production and distribution. Factory committees must not be talking shops! Their task is to lead and organise the fight against Stalinist dictatorship and economic disruption. Revolutionaries demand that factory committees impose workers' control in the workplace. That does not mean accepting responsibility for the chaos, but insisting on the right to veto management decisions, to open the books of management, state-controlled unions and planning ministries, for workers' control of the plan and provide! Only then will there be no possibility of corruption and privilege for a bureaucratic caste living off the backs of the working class. To win these rights we rely on the weapons of working class action: occupations, strikes, militant demonstrations and organised physical self-defence!

FOR AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT!

Factory organisation alone is not enough. Within the working class we especially need independent organisations of women who have the double burden of work and the family. They must take their rightful place in the struggle, they must insist that unions and parties organise to make possible the full and equal involvement of women at all levels. The youth too, need their own organisations and representation. They can

be relied upon to provide the most enthusiastic and energetic fighters for their class—if they are treated as equals!

At city-wide, regional and national levels the workers need their own class organisations. Democratic election, accountability and recall must be the rule throughout. For workers' councils in every town, for a national congress of workers' councils and a workers' government responsible only to that congress!

The workers' councils must take control of society, supervise the total revision of the plan to meet the needs of the workers, keep order on the streets and defend the democratic rights of the working class.

The workers' government will reach out to the workers of the BRD and of all of Europe to support it, to defend it, to join with it in the European Revolution! For the revolutionary re-unification of Germany! For the united socialist states of Europe!

SMASH THE STALINIST DICTATORSHIP!

The old gang have been forced out of office but much of their machine is still there. The power of working class mobilisation has demobilised the Stasi. Good! But the working class has not yet imposed its own law and its own order on society. When capitalists and Stalinists both talk of the need for "stability" they mean

preserving and re-grouping the forces of repression that they both hope to use in the future against the working class.

Consistent revolutionaries will never forget that the state is "essentially special bodies of armed men" as Engels said and Deng Xiaoping proved once again in Tiananmen Square. The Stalinists' "armed bodies of men" must be completely disbanded and broken up by the workers' organisations. Break down their discipline, for soldiers' committees in all barracks and soldiers' councils in all regiments and divisions, for the election of officers, the ending of privilege and for maximum wages to be based on those of a skilled worker.

For a workers' militia of rank and file men and women to defend the factories, the working class organisations and meetings. Hunt down the Stalinist parasites and spies, keep out the capitalist speculators, disband the repressive apparatus, impose working class control of the plan, of production and distribution!

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY!

Since 1933, open working class organisation has been outlawed. Even under Weimar, the Stalinisation of the KPD and the class collaboration of the SPD prevented the growth of a consistent revolutionary party based

on the unfalsified programme of Lenin and Trotsky.

Such a party must be built now, while the opportunity lasts. The most class conscious and militant workers, those willing to accept the responsibility of leadership must organise themselves as a genuine communist party. This means a party united by its dedication to the overthrow of Stalinism, to the defeat of capitalism, and to the building of the international revolution. It must have real democracy within its ranks to determine its tactics and strategy, but it must also be disciplined and centralised in action, both leadership and membership must be accountable to the party. This is democratic centralism, not the bureaucratic centralism of the Stalinist parties.

As Stalinism crumbles across the globe, as imperialism prepares its offensive, as the semi-colonies groan under repression and starvation, it is more obvious than ever that only a global defeat of capitalism can open the way to socialism. The revolutionary party, too, must be international like the revolutionary Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky!

- Down with "socialism in one country"!
- For permanent revolution!
- For a new revolutionary communist International!

The collapse of Stalinism has sharply posed questions about the nature of the E. European states. Almost universally it is agreed that in these states major steps are being taken towards the restoration of capitalism.

The Socialist Workers Movement, however, are almost alone in claiming that this is not so. They argue that these countries are already capitalist—state-capitalist—with a ruling class no different in essence from those in the west. Indifferent to the events which daily contradict their position, ignorant of elementary Marxist political economy, the SWM continue to challenge the line established by Trotsky that the USSR remained a degenerated workers' state—Stalinism had not restored capitalism.

This article addresses the rash of half-truths and distortions of Trotsky's position which masquerades as Marxist theory within the SWM.

USSR Part of World Capitalism?

● *The economic and military pressure of world capitalism and the world market forces the Stalinist bureaucracy to engage in competitive capital accumulation through the exploitation of their working class.* (SW 63, p.5). *These states are key components of international capitalism.* (D. Carroll, SWM, Irish Times, 22/11/89)

The State monopoly of foreign trade has been crucial in all the degenerate workers' states in protecting home enterprises from competition with external capital. That is why it has been possible for them to survive despite disastrously inefficient techniques and organisation relative to capitalism. The most developed of all the post-capitalist states, the German Democratic Republic, has little if any industry which can compete favourably with the average level of efficiency and technology in the west! It is absurd to claim that these economies have been driven by capitalist competition. Far from being a 'key component', the Stalinist states have been the most autarkic countries in the whole epoch of world capitalism.

In Marx's explanation of capitalist competition the capitalists confront each other through the exchange of commodities. They are driven to maximise the profit in terms of the exchange values of their commodities. What they produce, what use it may be, is irrelevant. The hallmark of capitalist competition is the relentless drive to increase efficiency, productivity, and capital accumulation as the key to higher profit rates. Any enterprise not driven on such principles is not in any meaningful sense part of the system of capitalist competition.

The Comecon countries, by contrast, trade by bartering goods in terms of their usefulness for each national economy—oil for machinery for beef etc. Trade with the capitalist market of the "west" has been marginal, because they are not integrated into capitalism. The non-convertibility of their currencies is a pow-

Trotskyism versus State Capitalism



erful expression of this non-integration into world capitalism!

Every workers' state must compete with the capitalist powers, as long as capitalism dominates the globe. This competition is overwhelmingly political and military, using also economic blockades. It will be even more ruthless against a healthy workers' state determined to internationalise the revolution! It is illogical to claim that this form of 'competition' obliges the workers' state to become capitalist. Factories and infrastructures etc. are not developed as accumulations of exchange value allocated to different sectors so as to create the highest rate of profit irrespective of what they produce. The opposite is the case, even under the bureaucracy.

The state-capitalist theory caricatures the "USSR Ltd." as a "single capitalist" in the world market. Unlike a 'capitalist', however, the USSR has never, could never, invest its surplus in the stock markets or profitable corporations of world capitalism with a view to maximising its profits. Neither in trade, investment nor enterprise linkages can one find evidence of meaningful capitalist 'competition' or integration into capitalism!

Stalinist States More Progressive?

● *The tradition of Trotsky's followers has been to regard the degenerate workers' states as more progressive than the capitalist West. They are seen as a half-way house to socialism.*

Trotsky described Stalin's victory as a political counter-revolution. He likened Stalinism's repressive apparatus to that of fascism, though based on post-capitalist property forms. He exposed the reactionary role of the USSR under Stalin on a world scale, selling out the proletarian revolution in China, France, Spain. The "bureaucratically degenerated workers' state" was thus a counter-revolutionary state. The repressive institutions and armed bodies which protect the political rule of Stalinism must be smashed. That is, these states must be smashed. Neither Trotsky nor we who share his position regard the Stalinist states as "progressive".

Despite the reactionary nature of those states, there exists within them the forms of property which are preconditions for building socialism—not the only preconditions, but crucial, objective, material preconditions for developing a socialist mode of production. On a historical scale, these property forms are progressive relative to capitalism—even though, under the control of the Stalinist

bureaucracy they are less productive than capitalism.

In any conflict with imperialism we take the side of the degenerate workers' states in order to protect the gains which remain from the overthrow of capitalism there.

Property form not fundamental to Socialism?

● *"What is fundamental to Marxism and socialism is not the form of property as such (state ownership existed as far back as ancient Egypt) but the self-emancipation of the working class."* (SW no.63, p.5)

Throughout history, what has been fundamental to the advance of human society has been precisely the mode of production, and how it defines the relationship of the social classes in production. This is precisely what "the form of property" means.

The property forms of the degenerate workers states cannot be reduced to the abstraction of "state ownership". The property forms of a workers' state are characterised by the combination of: (a) expropriation of the capitalist class, (b) the integration of the economy by a plan rather than determination by the market (c) the state monopoly of foreign trade.

The self-emancipation of the working class is crucial in two respects, neither of which lessens the importance of the form of property. Firstly, as a general principle of history, the new form of property can only be created by victorious workers' revolution over the bourgeoisie (1917 being the only example yet in history). Secondly, and unique to socialism, the new mode of production can only be developed under the conscious democratic control of the working class—the control which Stalinism usurps.

Workers' States Without Workers' Control?

● *It is obscene to suggest that such anti-working class states could ever be described as workers' states of any kind. Whether Trotskyists call them 'degenerate' or not, calling them 'workers states' is outrageous.*

This argument starts out from a one-sided insistence only on the subjective or political conditions for socialism—active control by the workers. There are also objective preconditions for socialism. In the USSR etc. they still exist despite the political counter-revolution of Stalinism. For Marx, it was such objective features of the mode of production which determined the fundamental class character of a state.

Whether we call it workers or bourgeois state is not a moral question of whether the state upholds the standards of proletarian socialism or is brutally oppressive of workers. It is not even a political question of which class directly exercises daily political power. The class character of a state is decided by which forms of property dominate the economy, the capitalist private property of the bourgeoisie, or the nationalised and planned property expropriated from the bourgeoisie which can only realise its potential as socialism.

Even in a bourgeois capitalist state the bourgeoisie may be denied all political control, its parties and press banned, its parliament suppressed etc. as by fascist dictatorship, without undermining the capitalist mode of production. It remains a distorted bourgeois state.

The experience of Stalinism has tragically taught us the lesson that workers' control may also be suppressed in a state based on the working-class mode of production, while remaining, in its objective features, a workers' state, but a profoundly degenerated one. The new mode of production is arrested in its development by the suppression of workers' control. The transition to socialism is decisively blocked.

Along with Trotsky we say that the USSR "can be called a workers' state in approximately the same sense—despite the vast difference of scale—in which the trade union, led and betrayed by opportunists, that is, by agents of capital, can be called a workers' organisation. Just as the trade unions under capitalism are workers' organisations run by class collaborationist bureaucratic castes in the working class, so the USSR remains a state where the working class is the ruling class but where power is in the hands of a reactionary bureaucratic caste" (Writings 1935-36, NY 1970, p.360)

Workers' States Without Workers' Revolution?

● *Marxists hold that only workers' revolution can overthrow capitalism. There was no such revolution in Eastern Europe, so, whatever about the USSR being a degenerated workers' state, the East European countries could in no sense be workers' states as IWC believe.*

Trotsky lived to see Stalinism militarily liquidate the rule of the bourgeoisie in East Poland and the Baltic States. He equated the resulting societies with that of the USSR in their essential class character. Capitalism in these local areas was replaced by the bureaucratised post-capitalist

system as a by-product of a reactionary strategy of collusion with fascist imperialism. Stalin's aim was not to "extend socialism". These new "workers' states" had not 'degenerated' from a revolutionary origin—they were degenerate from birth, or 'deformed'.

This does not invalidate the principle that workers' revolution is necessary to abolish capitalism? The overturn of capitalism in E. Europe was carried out by a state whose class character was determined by the 1917 revolution. The bureaucracy rests on property forms fundamentally antagonistic to capitalism. Despite its striving to escape from this dependence, Stalinism cannot co-exist with capitalism within its own borders. In 1939 it could not co-exist with it within its newly extended western borders. Capitalism could thus be overturned locally by the bureaucracy of a workers' state when only when they had no choice for their own strategic survival.

The USSR bureaucracy could certainly never create a healthy workers' state anywhere—that would be suicide for the general interests of the bureaucracy! Their first concern in abolishing capitalism in E. Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary etc. was to take away all independent initiative from the workers' organisations.

The Marxist principle of workers' revolution against capitalism is a general principle for the working class which, in this century, exists in world-wide interdependence. Locally, however, the general principle may be partially contradicted by forces acting on a global level.

Stalin's reactionary global struggle for peaceful co-existence with imperialism 1944-48 required him to crush or betray workers' revolution everywhere. But in return he demanded imperialist agreement to neutralise the countries of his European Buffer Zone. While pushing for western agreement to this utopian plan, he kept capitalism intact in those countries, under the rule of puppet Popular Front governments which deliberately included bourgeois parties.

Imperialism replied with an ideological war and economic inducements to break Stalin's control of the Zone. The Marshall Plan aid began to undermine his control of the puppet governments and renege opposition among the bourgeoisie within the buffer countries. To prevent imperialist penetration of the region became a matter of survival for Stalinism. It necessitated the cold liquidation from above of the E. European capitalists and the replacement of the bourgeois governments with bureaucratic stalinist governments.

Out of such counter-revolutionary global strategy there were created, as a by-product, post-capitalist societies which Trotskyists defend against imperialism in the same way as they would defend the USSR against imperialism.

The originators of the SWM's theory about the USSR refused to believe any longer after 1947 that Stalin's regime

was a contradictory one balancing on the antagonism between world capitalism and a post-capitalist property system. They in fact exaggerated the historic stability of Stalinism by saying it was just another form of the established capitalist mode of production. By contrast Trotsky's analysis correctly understood the unstable nature of this historically illegitimate caste.

No Reason to fear capitalist restoration?

● *SWM do not advocate the introduction of the market but "neither do we fear a restoration of capitalism since capitalism already exists".* (SW no. 63)

To label as 'capitalism' an economic system where production is not normally regulated by the market contradicts Marx directly. A return to dominance by the market in E. Europe is a return to capitalism. Dominance by the market stands in total contradiction to the whole economic basis of the Stalinist states, just as it would in a healthy workers' state.

Limited market measures caused gigantic contradictions in China, bringing savage reaction from the bureaucracy. With the USSR's attempt to re-create a neutral zone in Eastern Europe, Chinese-style resistance from the isolated bureaucracy of Hungary, Poland or Czechoslovakia etc. becomes less and less possible. The actual restoration of capitalism looms as a real possibility unless the working class is won not only to overthrow Stalinism but, while doing so, to preserve the post-capitalist property forms.

Far from being indifferent to this outcome, socialists must fear it as a potential tragedy on a historic scale. In terms of markets, cheap educated workforces, and the absolutely knock-down prices at which existing enterprises would be bought up, a huge boost to capital accumulation and a vast extension of the capitalist system would be the outcome. Not only would it reduce most of these states to quite backward semi-colonies of EC, US and Japanese capitalism, it would also give a vast new lease of life to international capitalism as a whole.

SWM's theory of "state-capitalism" disarms socialists in the face of this historic danger.

The "Orthodox" Trotskyist view?

● *The orthodox Trotskyist analysis "is held by only a small minority" (Socialist Worker 63, Jan 1990, p.5, col 5)*

Those who believe the USSR to be "state capitalist" are in fact the "minority" among the tens of thousands of organised militants world-wide claiming to stand in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. In the same paper the SWM spotlights the Marxist left groups in E. Europe and the USSR who are active in the revolution against Stalinism. It dishonestly hides the fact that none of them share the SWM's belief that these are "state capitalist" societies! ■

For Democracy in SIPTU

THE BUREAUCRATIC merger of the ITGWU and FWUI was rushed through last year by John Carroll, about to retire from Liberty Hall, and Wm. Attley who was determined to use the occasion to "modernise" Irish trade unionism—towards more collaboration with the bosses.

The active opposition of the IWG to the basis of the merger was spelled out during 1989 in *Class Struggle*. No.14 in June carried the only detailed critical analysis yet published on the new structures. Despite an absurd, expensive and fraud-prone postal ballot only 23% voted. The size of the poll was kept secret from the members! Although less than 20% of the combined membership voted in favour it was clear that its opponents had failed to build any nucleus of an ongoing movement capable of fighting for workers' democracy in the new Scientific, Industrial, Professional, Technical Union. In this respect we pointed out the abject failure and defeatism particularly of *Militant* and the SWM.

The launch of SIPTU (costing tax-payers and union members over £3m) was celebrated by a fireworks display over the capital on New Year's Eve, an act of self-glorification by a clique of remote bureaucrats which found no echo of celebration whatever in the rank and file. This, combined with revelations in the *Tribune* about the earnings of the top officials of around £50,000 each, plus the claim that John Carroll's salary and car were worth £95,000 in 1989 and that he got £5,000 for one week in SIPTU, suggested to many activists more than a hint of Ceausescu's disease at the top of the union. The leaders' salaries are kept secret from the members who supposedly appoint and control them.

Appropriately enough the main guest of honour at the SIPTU baptism was Charles Haughey. Deeper collaboration with the Irish bosses and their parties is, after all, the hidden agenda of SIPTU. Its attempt to cut a new image dissociated from militancy or 'workers' is displayed on laughable billboards around the country proclaiming the worthless and barely intelligible message "SIPTU—from Swan Lake to the Irish Sea", emphasising that it's a union for ballet dancers and ships' officers. Even TV advertising slots have been used to promote the new name. Not even a tiny fraction of such funding has ever been devoted to keeping the members informed, less still in giving them a journal in which their differing viewpoints could be democratically expressed.

It will be five years before SIPTU holds its first national conference or before there are any elections for its National Executive Council. In the interim, effective power will rest with the six top executive officers, all of whom were national bureaucrats in the ITGWU and FWUI. This top six will preside over 27 voting executive members who, in effect, appointed themselves to these positions with no threat of elections for five years.

Below the National Executive Council is a new regional structure covering eight regions. Each has its own

unelected regional secretary who is expected to liaise more closely with local bourgeois planning and development bodies. This also cuts across the national unity of industrial sections. The traditional annual national conference is replaced with local conferences in each alternate year, lessening further the accountability of the national leadership. Pending their election in 1994, the Regional Executive Councils are appointed by the National Executive.

Shaking Off Their Mandates

At its first executive meeting, held ostentatiously in the National Concert Hall, the top brass formally re-affiliated the union to the ICTU, Labour Party etc. They had never told the rank and file that all previous policy decisions, and

position to re-affirm the policies of their choice from the joint past of their two unions!

Build a Rank and File Movement

Behind all of SIPTU's rules, with its pretensions of democratic control by the members, the real structure of the union is a hierarchy of full-time, mostly unelected officials. The top positions are filled from among their ranks. It is possible to be employed directly into this caste through an ad in the *Irish Times* and to end up running the whole union without ever having been a worker member of a trade union!

These salaried brokers are the every-day agents for imposing on the rank and file rules, views, demands, prohibitions and censorship determined by the top leaders. Even at workplace section meetings of the members, the employed official dominates. The only forum where members have the formal opportunity to challenge the leaders or fight

open to return to. The conditions for workers' democracy in the trade unions clearly have to be fought for, against both the employers and the union bureaucrats.

Democratic structures are only possible on the basis of giving real power to the rank and file. Workplace branches with general meetings during work time, and with special creches for women members' infants, are the only adequate basis for the rank and file to exercise control. No unelected officer should ever have the right to determine procedure at meetings or to speak except by leave of the members.

The only purpose there can be for such workers' democracy is to enable organised workers to struggle effectively to defend and advance the interests of their class. Indeed, real steps towards workers' democracy can only be won by rank and file movements which are actively engaged in struggle.

The building of a rank and



▲ Johnny Money-Bags Carroll takes away £5,000 after one week's work as SIPTU President. That's on top of the ITGWU car and salary worth £95,000 which he got in 1989!

affiliations, of both unions lapsed with the formation of the new union—a fact revealed, yet again, only in the bourgeois media.

Not that it makes much difference to these self-perpetuating mandarins whether they have policy mandates or not from their annual conferences. When the FWUI executive in October considered a motion to issue a statement expressing union policy in favour of access to abortion information, they voted it down. Rather, Attley and his male cronies voted against it, the women members alone voting for it! So much even for the formalities of union democracy! For the next few years they are apparently in a

position to re-affirm the policies of their choice from the joint past of their two unions!

Workers Democracy

What is necessary is to replace the whole bureaucratic structure by annually elected and recallable officers right from the shop steward up to the general secretary, earning no more than the average skilled worker's wage. That means keeping their jobs

file movement, explicitly on a programme of opposition to the present capitalist offensive, is a vital task for militants. That is the perspective to which we seek to win all trade union activists who despise the self-seeking privileged role of the union leaders. They balance between workers' needs and the pressure of the bosses, and will never fundamentally challenge capitalism. Always they will put the "national interest" of the ruling class before the material needs of their own members when the chips are down. Their present deal with Haughey is a good example.■

Our Programme

THIS MONTH sees the publication by the LRCI of *The Trotskyist Manifesto*. For the first time in over 40 years a new transitional programme for world socialist revolution has emerged. What is a programme and what do we mean when we refer to its character and method as transitional? This article is the first in a series which will attempt to explain what we believe defines the essence of the marxist programme as well as the content and political answers *The Trotskyist Manifesto* seeks to provide.

The Marxist programme is based on the principles of scientific socialism. It analyses issues from the standpoint of dialectical materialism. It asserts that the class struggle is the motor force of history and recognises the working class as the only consistently revolutionary class. There is no brick wall between strategy, tactics and principles in the Marxist programme. This is clear from the Communist Manifesto through to Trotsky's Transitional Programme. It is in the spirit of this method that we have developed the new programme of the LRCI.

Social-democracy continues to peddle the minimum-maximum programme, pioneered in the epoch of free competition capitalism. This programme was characterised by the rigid separation of minimum goal (achievable within the framework of capitalism) and the maximum goal of socialism.

In the epoch of free competition capitalism, the working class had to fight for a series of economic and political rights in order to build a mass movement of unions and political parties. However, in this very process a reformist bureaucracy was crystallised out. For this bureaucracy, selected elements of the minimum programme, achieved by peaceful parliamentary means, became ends in themselves. This stood in sharp contrast to the position of Engels and Lenin who argued that these were only means for developing the struggle to overthrow capitalism.

The onset of the Imperialist epoch greatly strengthened the reformist bureaucracy not least by boosting the labour aristocracy on which it rested. Exploiting the weakness of the minimum-maximum programme, this bureaucracy succeeded in rigidly separating the struggle for reforms (the minimum) from the fight to overthrow capitalism (the maximum).

World Stalinism, and even sections of petty bourgeois nationalism, misled the masses with a variation of the minimum-maximum programme.

This variation was fashioned by the conservative bureaucracy of the USSR in the 1920s during the period of its political counter-revolution against the working class.

According to this programme, it is possible for revolutions to pass through a democratic stage prior to a peaceful evolution to socialism. The theory argues that the democratic stage—during which labour must wait—is rigidly separated from a socialist stage.

This Stalinist variation of the minimum-maximum programme is a noose round the neck of the proletariat and the oppressed. Its consequence is always counter-revolution either by a capitalist class able to regroup during the "democratic stage" (Chile, Portugal, Iran) or by a Stalinist bureaucracy obliged to liquidate capitalism to defend itself, but only after it has already politically exploited the working class (East Europe, China, Indo-China and Cuba.)

Whether in its Stalinist or Social Democratic garb the minimum-maximum programme has long outlived its progressive role. Imperialism is incapable of overseeing systematic agrarian reform or sustaining parliamentary democ-

racy in much of the semi colonial world. Even the workers of the most highly developed countries increasingly need a programme that links the most immediate defensive struggles with the main task of the epoch—the struggle for working class power. To advance the spontaneous struggle towards socialist goals a bridge is needed. The programme of transitional demands is such a bridge.

Marx and Engels formulated a set of transitional demands in the 1848 Communist Manifesto. Later, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, and later still the Communist International at its first four congresses, formulated focussed transitional action programmes. However, Trotsky's Transitional Programme of 1938 was the clearest and most complete expression of the programmatic development that had occurred in the preceding ninety years of Marxism. His was a sharply defined action programme addressing the key questions of the day and answering them in the light of the experience of the previous two decades of struggle.

After fifty years of profound developments in world imperialism, world stalinism, the semi colonies, it became necessary to re-elaborate the Transitional Programme. This the LRCI has done.

Our programme, like the 1938 programme is a development of the previous programmes of revolutionary Marxism not a break from them. Like the preceding programmes it will be broken down into action programmes for particular conjunctures. Such action programmes will contain all the key elements of the general programme but will sharply focus them to a particular situation or country.

Our programme is one for world socialist revolution, focused towards the burning problems of the closing years of the twentieth century. As a programme of transition to socialist revolution it applies with full force both to Imperialist and Imperialised countries. Equally, it is a programme for transition to socialism within the degenerated workers states.

While our programme contains at its core a focussed action programme similar to that of the 1938 programme, it has also had to confront the fact that the continuity of the revolutionary Marxist movement was broken in 1951 when the Fourth International collapsed into centrism.

Our programme is not only aimed at guiding the struggles of millions but aimed at defining the LRCI against the many varieties of centrism that claim the mantle of Trotsky.

Our programme is not the last word on the tactics and strategy for socialist revolution.

We recognise that discussion with militants where the LRCI has, as yet, no presence will enable us to further develop the world character of our new programme. But we are convinced that our programme is a revolutionary guide to action that can serve as the bedrock of such development.

Our programme, which in its method, its analysis, its demands, its strategy and tactics embodies the living and guiding spirit of revolutionary Marxism lays the basis for the re-establishment of authentic Trotskyism on a world scale once again.■

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SMASH ICTU-HAUGHEY COLLABORATION

IN THE run up to the ICTU special conference on Feb. 8th trade union leaders displayed a new degree of arrogance in their attempt to guarantee themselves another three years of cosy class collaboration with Fianna Fáil—for the sake of “national” recovery, at working class expense. The coming months are crucial for them and for the rank and file. The majority of the leaders are resolved at all costs to tie the hands of workers so as to hold the line against any revival of wage militancy.

The SIPTU leaders, having cast off even the pretence of accountability to their members for the first five years of their union merger, arrogantly tried to dismiss as irrelevant the debate on whether to pull out of the present “Programme for National Recovery”. This was the very debate for which the special ICTU conference had been summoned! Only when engineering workers’ leaders angrily castigated Attley & Co. in public did the ICTU boss Cassells re-affirm that it was indeed the business of the conference to decide on whether or not to withdraw from the PNR.

Not that Cassells and his cronies were trying to be impartial! They worked hard for the past two years to persuade the public that black is white, that the PNR was protecting wages, saving the public sector from privatisation, and above all, meeting its job targets. With emigration at a record 46,000 a year, no significant increase in net jobs, and a steady decline in manufacturing throughout the ‘80s, he has had his work cut out.

Union bureaucrats have not been slack with their public relations for the PNR within their own organisations either. In order to ratify the deal they had to “consult” the members in a national ballot which was narrowly carried despite most union propaganda being exclusively and undemocratically in favour of the PNR. No such consultation was risked, however, in the run up to February’s decision on whether to pull out of it.

Attley’s propaganda campaign was intended to turn SIPTU’s consultative conference on Feb. 7th into one more opportunity to promote a new PNR agreement for a

whole new period! But consult the rank and file? No way! Delegates chosen at bureaucratic annual conferences last spring, have been having their ears bent instead by rhetoric and sales-talk from above, not by the demands of the members from below.

sales-team will function as a buffer for the predicted decision of the CPSSU to press ahead regardless with the present Haughey pact—and a new one!

The union bureaucrats have reason to fear any genuine referral of the issue to the rank and file. Apart from the lying promises about jobs and taxes, workers have suffered a wage cut against the 4.5% inflation rate while profits rose massively. Large sections of the working class have been swindled out of potential increases which could have been won from the huge increases in productivity and

to run from the end of 1990, probably for another three years. On their record we can be sure that they will settle for half of nothing and tell us it’s the best they can get—but only after protracted negotiations conducted without any attempt whatever to mobilise the mass of the working class to enforce our demands for what we need as a class.

On 26 January, the defenders of the PNR pleaded with Haughey for tax and welfare concessions in the Budget to help them carry the ICTU conference. According to the *Tribune* a £5 tax cut was what Attley was “demanding from the Government before he will call next month for his 180,000 members to continue to support the PNR” (Jan 28th). Empty rhetoric indeed from two-faced brokers whose real business is not to get more out of the present deal but to saddle workers with yet another one just as shoddy.

Since 1970 these bureaucrats have imposed national wage limits on workers through collaborationist deals with employers and the state, deals which had one major objective—to tie the hands of the rank and file and forbid strike action for further increases. The consequences have been disastrous in terms of the decay of workplace democracy in the unions and the growth of an ever more bloated bureaucracy of arrogant full-time officials, many on outrageous salaries, who are almost totally beyond any accountability to the rank and file.

A return to free collective bargaining on the present British model is not enough, however. These brokers are most dangerous when, brimming with crocodile tears, they plead the cause of the weakest sections as justification for centralised deals which guarantee “rises” across the board to all workers, not just the strongly placed who benefit most under sectional bargaining. The truth is that the weak sections do not benefit by effectively lowering living conditions for all, and undermin-

profits in the private sector. Employers who have made no secret of their ability to pay more have been able to mock union negotiators for tying themselves to a deal which blocks these available increases!

Ever sensitive to appearances, Flynn (LGPSU) and Attley have been posturing in public with new demands as pre-conditions for a new PNR

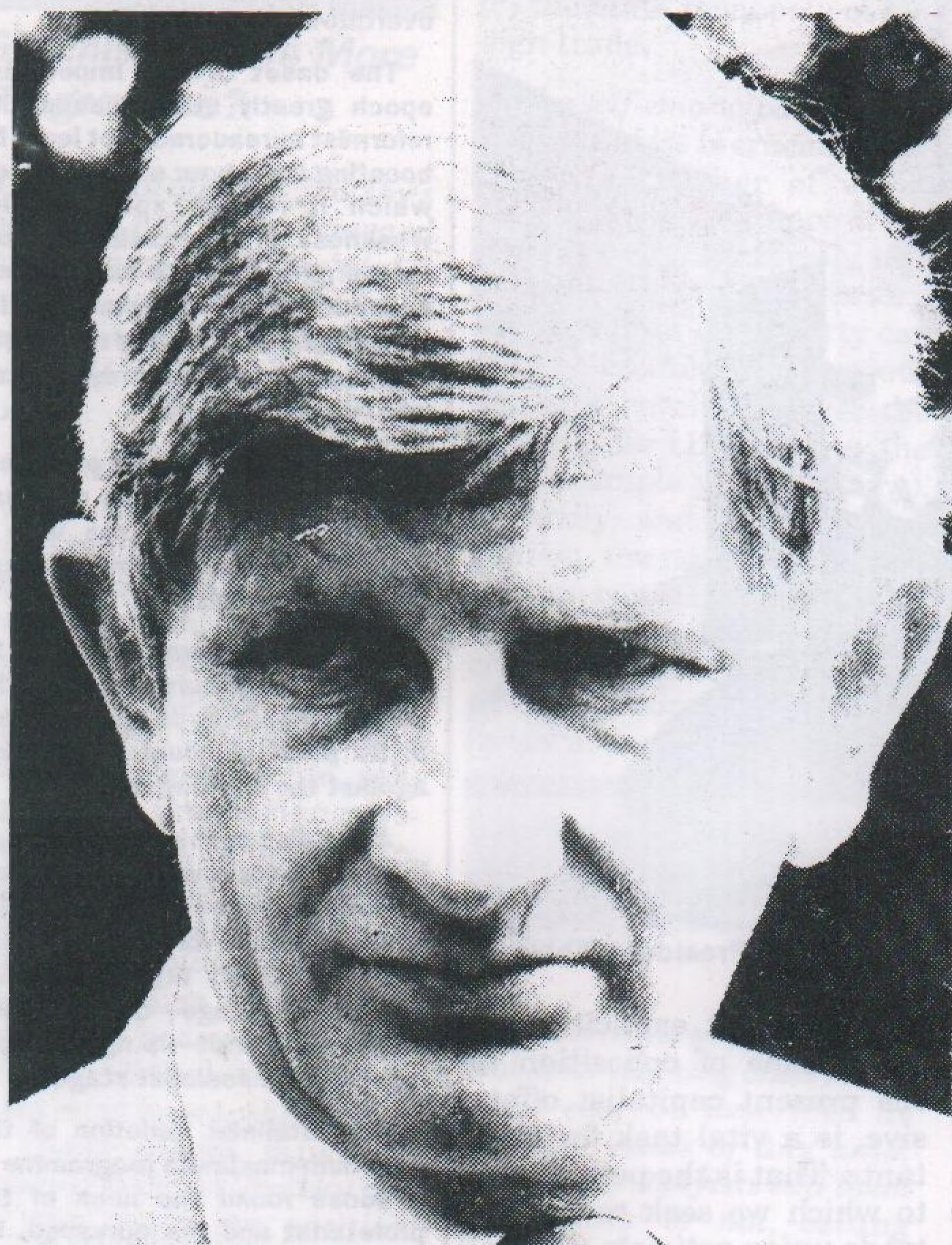


ing our ability to organise in our own defence for either the strong or the weak.

In reply to those who counterpose purely sectional bargaining to class-collaborationist national bargaining, a rank and file movement must be built around the demands for *united action* across the widest possible sections of workers, fighting at all times to force the official leaders to confront the bosses with a nationally mobilised movement.

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Such a movement must begin by fighting for unifying demands as well as taking up the special demands of each section. Only in that way can workers link the power of the strongest sections to the needs of the weakest. No-strike deals which trade pay restraint for promises of “national recovery” not only do not benefit the unemployed, or the low-paid, they weaken the whole movement.



▲ William Attley, SIPTU President.

O’Dowd’s Civil and Public Services Staff Union was not about to consult even its elected delegates, but, like many unions simply decided at executive level how its mouthpieces would vote at ICTU. O’Dowd’s head office treated hand-picked officers of the branches to a session in Malahide’s Grand Hotel on 19th December to have Cassells indoctrinate them on the need for the PNR. This

● Vote to ditch the PNR! Vote against negotiations for any new deal.

● Smash class collaboration between the Union leaders and the bosses’ party, Fianna Fáil, by fighting for claims in defiance of its terms.

● For free collective bargaining and militant action across the whole union movement.

● Force the union leaders and the Labour and Workers’ Party to fight to win:

● A national minimum wage and social welfare minimum no less than two-thirds of the average male industrial wage, indexed to prices.

● Full indexation of all wages to compensate for all price rises

● Real increases to catch up on past cuts and to take back the bloated profits extracted from workers by their bosses.

● State schemes of useful employment to create jobs for all, under workers’ control and at trade union rates.

● Force Labour and Workers Party to use the Dáil to call out mass working-class based campaigns of opposition to the cuts in health education and local services!

● For steeply progressive taxes on wealth, capital and profits.

● Repudiate the exploitative ‘national debt’ from which Irish and international speculators and parasites are milking huge profits at the expense of the old, the poor, the sick and the working class.